

the at least one first gripper engaging the first side edge of the sheet near the front end of the sheet, the at least one second gripper engaging the second side edge of the sheet near the front end of the sheet, the at least one first gripper being mechanically decoupled from the at least one second gripper;

wherein the first and second rails run along the nip.

a¹
(concluded)

3. (Amended) The rotary printing press with the sheet transport system as recited in claim 2 further comprising a feeder and a delivery device, wherein the first and second rails run continuously between the feeder and the delivery device.

4. (Amended) The rotary printing press with the sheet transport system as recited in claim 2 further comprising an electronic control circuit for synchronizing the motion of the first and second grippers with the rotation of cylinders of the rotary printing press.

5. (Amended) The rotary printing press with the sheet transport system as recited in claim 4 wherein the control circuit synchronizes the motion of the first grippers and second grippers.

6. (Amended) The sheet transport system as recited in claim 14 further comprising at least one pair of lagging grippers running on the first and second rails to grip a lagging end of the sheet.

a²

8. (Amended) The sheet transport system as recited in claim 14 wherein the first and second driven grippers each include two clamping jaws, and further comprising magnets arranged at at least one of an intake area and at an outlet area of the first and second rails for opening the clamping jaws by magnetic force.

a³

10. (Amended) The sheet transport system as recited in claim 14 further comprising an intake area for the sheet and an outlet area, wherein the first and second rails diverge at at least one of the intake area and the outlet area transversely to the feed direction, in a plane of the transported sheet.

11. (Amended) The rotary printing press with the sheet transport system as recited in claim 2 wherein the first and second grippers hold the sheet in an area of the sheet that extends beyond a width of the cylinders.

*a³
(concluded)*

12. (Amended) A method for transporting a sheet having a front edge and a first side edge and a second side edge in a rotary printing press comprising:

gripping the first side edge near the front edge with a first gripper;

gripping the second side edge near the front edge with a second gripper mechanically decoupled from the first gripper; and

moving the first and second grippers on rails configured on both sides of a sheet transport path so as to move the sheet along the sheet transport path.

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Please add new claims 14 to 20:

14. (New) A sheet transport system for a rotary printing press comprising:

a first rail configured on one side of a sheet transport path and a second rail configured on the other side of the sheet transport path; and

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at least one first driven gripper being guided on the first rail and at least one second driven gripper being guided on the second rail,

the at least one first gripper and the at least one second gripper pulling a sheet to be conveyed in a feed direction, the sheet having a first side edge, a second side edge and a front end with respect to the feed direction,

the at least one first gripper engaging the first side edge of the sheet near the front end of the sheet, the at least one second gripper engaging the second side edge of the sheet near the front end of the sheet, the at least one first gripper being mechanically decoupled from the at least one second gripper.

15. (New) A sheet transport system for a rotary printing press comprising:

a first rail configured on one side of a sheet transport path and a second rail configured on the other side of the sheet transport path; and

at least one first driven gripper being guided on the first rail and at least one second driven gripper being guided on the second rail,

the at least one first gripper and the at least one second gripper pulling a sheet to be conveyed in a feed direction, the sheet having a first side edge, a second side edge and a front end with respect to the feed direction,

the at least one first gripper engaging the first side edge of the sheet near the front end of the sheet, the at least one second gripper engaging the second side edge of the sheet near the front end of the sheet, the sheet having a free clearance in the feed direction over at least a section of the front end.

16. (New) The sheet transport system as recited in claim 15 further comprising at least one pair of lagging grippers running on the first and second rails to grip a lagging end of the sheet.

17. (New) The sheet transport system as recited in claim 16 wherein the lagging gripper pair is braked.

18. (New) The sheet transport system as recited in claim 15 wherein the first and second driven grippers each include two clamping jaws, and further comprising magnets arranged at at least one of an intake area and at an outlet area of the first and second rails for opening the clamping jaws by magnetic force.

19. (New) The sheet transport system as recited in claim 18 wherein the clamping jaws are forced together by a spring element.

20. (New) The sheet transport system as recited in claim 15 wherein the first and second rails diverge at at least one of at an intake area and an outlet area transversely to the feed direction, in a plane of the transported sheet.